

18-20 St. Charles Street (Houses)

Boston
Suffolk County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1109

HABS
MASS,
13-BOST,
89-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

18-20 ST. CHARLES STREET (HOUSE\$)

HABS
MASS,
13-BOST,
89-

Location: 18-20 St. Charles Street, Boston, Massachusetts

Present Owner: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, 50
High Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02110

Present Occupant: Multiple.

Present Use: Dwelling; Demolished c. 1980.

Significance: This house, circa 1874, is one of the last single-family bow-fronted rowhouses to be built in Boston. This structure is included in the South End Historic District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1874.
2. Architect: None
3. Original and Subsequent owners: See Supplemental Material
4. Builder: William B. Hewitt, mason; and John W. Webster, ship carpenter
5. Alteration and additions: Subdivided into multiple units at an unknown date.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Bibliography:

- a. Primary and unpublished sources: City of Boston Building Department, Building Permits, City Hall, Boston, Massachusetts Suffolk County Registry of Deeds, Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston, Massachusetts.
- b. Secondary and published sources: Bunting, Bainbridge. Houses of Boston's Back Bay. Harvard University Press; 1967.

Tucci, Douglas S. Built in Boston, New York Graphic Society,

Whitehill, Walter Muir. Boston: A Topographical History. Harvard University Press, 1959.

Location: 18 St. Charles Street (west side of street), Boston,
Suffolk County, Massachusetts.

Original and subsequent owners: The following is a complete
chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Ref-
erence is in the Suffolk County Registry of Deeds.

1863 Deed February 14, 1863 recorded February 14, 1863 in Book
823 page 185 (land only).

The Boston Water Power Company
to
Norman Munson

Deed February 14, 1863 recorded February 14, 1863 in Book
823 page 186 (land only).

Norman Munson

to

Jonathan Amory Davis, Gardiner Howland Shaw, Quincy A. Shaw,
and Peleg W. Chandler.

1865 Deed November 20, 1865 recorded March 23, 1867 in Book 896
page 35 (land only).

Quincy A. Shaw

to

Gardiner Howland Shaw and Quincy A. Shaw, Trustees of The
Shaw Institute or Asylum for Mariner's Children under the
will of Robert G. Shaw, Sr.

1868 Deed March 23, 1868 recorded March 23, 1868 in Book 920
page 137 (land only).

Deed November 13, 1868 recorded November 13, 1868 in Book
943 page 212 (confirmatory deed-land only).

Quincy A. Shaw, Trustee

to

Nathan Matthews

Continued on the next page.

- 1868 Deed June 19, 1868 recorded June 20, 1868
in Book 929 page 127 (land only)
Edward D. Sohler and Sewall Tappan, Trustees
under the will of J. Amory Davis of a trust
for Frances E.A. Davis and Ann W. Davis
to
Nathan Matthews
- Deed October 12, 1868 recorded October 13, 1868
in Book 940 page 159 (land only)
Theodore Lyman and Henry S. Russell, Trustees
under the will of Gardiner Howland Shaw
to
Nathan Matthews
- 1873 Deed April 19, 1873 recorded April 19, 1873
in Book 1154 page 82 (land only)
Peleg W. Chandler
to
Nathan Matthews
- Deed April 19, 1873 recorded April 19, 1873
in Book 1154 page 83 (land only)
Nathan Matthews
to
William B. Hewitt and John W. Webster
- 1874 Deed October 5, 1874 recorded October 5, 1874
in Book 1237 page 4 (land only)
William B. Hewitt and John W. Webster
to
Robert H. Pickett and Sarah E. Pickett (wife)
- 1879 Deed April 12, 1879 recorded April 12, 1879
in Book 1452 page 255
Robert H. Pickett and Sarah E. Pickett
to
Edward W. Ridgway
- Deed September 12, 1879 recorded September 13, 1879
in Book 1468 page 22
Edward W. Ridgway
to
Louisa M. Smith
- 1902 Deed February 19, 1902 recorded February 19, 1902
in Book 2808 page 372
Louisa M. Smith
to
Marie Louise Keith

- 1931 Deed July 2, 1931 recorded July 3, 1931
in Book 5269 page 88
Henry Ruskin and P. Joseph McManus, administrators
of the estate of Marie L. Keith
to
Frank Keith
- 1935 Deed June 6, 1935 recorded June 10, 1935
in Book 5530 page 480
Frank Keith
to
Catherine A. Groark
- 1950 Deed July 11, 1950 recorded July 11, 1950
in Book 6619 page 297
Catherine A. Groark
to
Warren L. Harrington
- 1951 Deed March 14, 1951 recorded March 15, 1951
in Book 6679 page 523
Warren L. Harrington
to
Daniel F. O'Connell
- 1964 Deed November 18, 1964 recorded November 18, 1964
in Book 7903 page 277
Daniel F. O'Connell
to
George Roland and Lucy Roland (wife)
- 1967 Deed October 6, 1967 recorded October 13, 1967
in Book 8153 page 535
George Roland and Lucy Roland
to
Lucy W. Roland
- 1969 Deed May 1, 1969 recorded May 1, 1969
in Book 8280 page 340
Lucy W. Roland
to
Walter J. Kozuch Jr. and Bernard V. Fitzpatrick
- 1974 Deed April 19, 1974 recorded April 19, 1974
in Book 8703 page 62
Walter J. Kozuch and Bernard V. Fitzpatrick
to
George B. Waldron and Lauren P. Waldron (wife)

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to
Robert H. Pickett and Sarah E. Pickett (wife)

Deed October 5, 1874 recorded October 5, 1874
in Book 1236 page 300 (land only)
Robert H. Pickett and Sarah E. Pickett
to
William B. Hewitt and John W. Webster

1875 Deed March 26, 1875 recorded March 26, 1875
in Book 1261 page 240 (land only)
William B. Hewitt
to
John W. Webster

Deed May 24, 1875 recorded May 24, 1875
in Book 1270 page 313
John W. Webster
to
James F. Moulton

- 1904 Deed September 2, 1904 recorded September 7, 1904
in Book 2989 page 231
Benjamin F. Johnson, Executor of James F. Moulton's
Estate
to
Charles H. Walker and Sarah J. Walker (wife)
- 1919 Deed May 9, 1919 recorded May 9, 1919
in Book 4136 page 258
Charles H. Walker and Sarah J. Walker
to
Julia Connors
- 1961 Deed February 11, 1961 recorded March 3, 1961
in Book 7541 page 578
Katherine M. Connors, Katherine J. Connors,
James J. Connors, Paul F. Connors, Heirs of
Julia Connors
to
Mary T. Boyle and Frank A. Connor, Heirs of
Julia Connors
- Deed March 21, 1961 recorded April 20, 1961
in Book 7551 page 271
Walter J. Sullivan Jr.
to
Mary T. Boyle and Frank A. Connor
- 1967 Deed April 10, 1967 recorded July 10, 1967
in Book 1831 page 158
Mary T. Boyle, Heir of Frank A. Connor
to
Eugene J. Boyle and Mary T. Boyle
- 1972 Deed April 22, 1972 recorded June 2, 1972
in Book 8538 page 722
Eugene J. Boyle, Heir of Mary T. Boyle
to
Thomas C. Duffly and Frances Lessin Duffly (wife)

Prepared by: Jean A. Follett
Research Assistant
Kaiser Engineers. Inc./Fay,
Spofford and Thorndike, Inc.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This house is one of the last single-family bowfronted rowhouses to be built in Boston.
2. Condition of fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 17' x 40', two bays wide, three stories plus a high basement.
2. Foundations: Cut granite blocks
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Red brick exterior walls with sandstone trim.
4. Structural system, framing: Brick load bearing walls, with wood frame interior.
5. Stoops: High stoop of twelve brown sandstone steps down under front stoop.
6. Chimneys: Two, in northwest party wall
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Double wooden front doors with glass with panels and pyramidal lozenge panels on lower third. Rear and basement entry with simple panel door.
 - b. Windows: Two over two double hung sashes. Three windows per floor on front and rear, with sandstone sills and flat lintels.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape: Pitched
 - b. Cornice: Metal clad band supported by denticulated brick with very large corbelled brackets at either end.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Stairways: One stairway runs from the basement to the third floor, runs inside a narrow hallway, and is approximately 2' 6" wide. A mahogany newell post is located in the basement, and a black walnut one is on the first floor. All the woodwork on the first floor, including the rail and balusters, is black walnut.
2. Flooring: Hard pine wood.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, ornamented with plaster medallions, one in basement, two on first floor.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Panelled doors correspond to woodwork.
 - b. Windows: Interior surround and panelling below are windows are of oak and mahogany.
5. Special decorative features: Marble mantels in each room of second floor and in the basement. The front doorknob is shaped like a flower.

D. Site:

1. General Setting and Orientation: This structure is facing east at end of a narrow street which abuts the railroad and the Massachusetts Turnpike.

Prepared by: Jean A. Follett
Research Assistant
Kaiser Engineers, Inc./Fay,
Spofford and Thorndike, Inc
August 1979

PART III PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Urban Mass Transportation Authority in compliance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the demolition of this building. John A Burns, A.I.A., and Emily J. Harris were the HABS project coordinators. Photographs were taken by Richard Cheek in October 1979. The written data was compiled by Jean A. Follet, of Kaiser Engineers, Inc./ Fay Spofford and Thorndike, Inc. in August 1979. This material was prepared for transmittal to the Library of Congress by Robert S. Lange of the HABS staff in August 1980.